

REMARKS

The following request for reconsideration and remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action mailed March 29, 2004 (Paper No. 13) in connection with the above-identified application and are being filed within the three-month shortened statutory period set for a response by the Office Action.

Claims 1-20 remain pending in the present application, and currently stand rejected. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims based on the following remarks.

The Examiner has now rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Thorne (U.S. Patent No. 6,021,310) in view of Lorello (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,870). Applicants respectfully traverse the §103(a) rejection.

As was previously pointed out, independent claim 1 recites a method of coupling a portable communications device (PCD) to a first network by way of a second network. As recited, the PCD is normally in radio communication with the first network, but is coupled to the first network by way of the second network when the PCD is out of radio communication with the first network. In the method, the PCD is coupled to the second network, and is caused to leave a first network mode and enter a second network mode. A network connection is established with the first network by way of the second network, and communication is entered into with the first network by way of the second network.

Independent claim 12 recites the method of claim 1, and further recites placing the PCD into a cradle having a serial port connector and a network connector so that the serial port of the PCD is coupled with the serial port connector of the cradle, and also coupling the network connector of the cradle to the second network.

Applicants again note that, as explained in the specification of the present application, the first network is typically a cellular or pager communications network. However, situations arise wherein the PCD is out of range of such pager or cellular communications network and therefore cannot communicate therewith in the normal manner, i.e., by the radio communications mechanism in the PCD. In such an instance, the PCD is coupled to a second network such as a telephone or computer network, and communication is established with the pager or cellular communication network by way of the telephone or computer network.

The hallmark of the present invention as recited in claims 1 and 12 is a PCD, such as portable text message device, that normally is in radio communication with a first network, such as a text message network, where the PCD can only couple to the first network and no other to exchange substantive information therewith, but where the PCD is out of communication with the first network and thus is coupled to the first network by way of the second network. As was previously pointed out, the present invention as recited in claims 1 and 12 is not incumbent in using the second network as an alternative to the first network, but as an intermediate network for accessing the first network when the first network cannot be accessed by radio communication.

The Thorne reference discloses a pager having a modem 48 coupled to a cellular receiver 50 and a cellular transmitter 54 for over-air communication with a cellular network. The modem 48 is also coupled to a telephone jack 34 on the pager for communication with a telephone line which is presumably coupled to a telephone network. However, and importantly, and as the Examiner again concedes, the Thorne reference does not disclose or suggest that the telephone network (i.e., the second network) is coupled to the

cellular network (i.e., the first network) such that the pager is coupled to the cellular network by way of the telephone network when the pager is out of radio communication with the cellular network, as is required by independent claims 1 and 12. As a result, and as the Examiner also again concedes, the Thorne reference also does not disclose or suggest establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network, and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network, as is required by claims 1 and 12.

Nevertheless, the Examiner this time points to the Lorello reference as disclosing establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network.

The Lorello reference discloses a short message service (SMS) network akin to a cellular telephone network, where the SMS network 100 includes a plurality of short message service centers (SMSCs) to service mobile subscribers. As seen in Fig. 1A in particular, each SMSC 120 may have one or more communications interfaces 121, 122 by which a controller 126 can communicate with the remainder of the SMS network 100.

However, and significantly, the Lorello reference discloses only a single SMS network 100 and no others, and does not at all disclose, suggest, or even consider how the SMS network 100 can be connected to by a subscriber by way of another network that is not the SMS network 100 when the subscriber is out of radio communication with the SMS network 100 so that the subscriber can enter into communication with the SMS network 100 by way of such another network, as required by claims 1 and 12.

Instead, within the single Lorello SMS network 100, the SMSC 120 only allows a subscriber in one service area of the SMS network 100 to communicate with another

SMSC 120 for another service area of the SMS network 100. However, such communication by the subscriber is still radio communication within the SMS network 100, and so such subscriber is again not out of radio communication with the SMS network 100 as is required by claims 1 and 12.

Moreover, and at any rate, the subscriber of the Lorello SMS network 100 is not disclosed within the Lorello reference as being caused to leave a first network mode and enter a second network mode, as is required by claims 1 and 12. Instead, the Lorello reference appears to be silent as to what is in fact necessary for the Lorello subscriber to communicate with one SMSC 120 as opposed to another, let alone any necessary mode shifts that must take place.

Further, and with regard to claim 12 in particular, the Lorello reference is entirely silent as to any cradle that a Lorello subscriber should or could place a PCD thereof into, as is required by such claim 12. Instead, since the Lorello subscriber is always in radio communication with the Lorello SMS network 100, such subscriber presumably has no need for any such cradle, especially for purposes of coupling the subscriber to the SMS network 100 by way of another network in the manner set forth in claims 1 and 12.

To conclude then, neither of the Thorne and Lorello references discloses or suggests establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network when direct radio communication with the first network is not available, as is required by claims 1 and 12. Accordingly, such references cannot be applied to make obvious claim 1 or claim 12 or any claims depending therefrom, including claims 2-11 and 13-20. As a result, Applicants

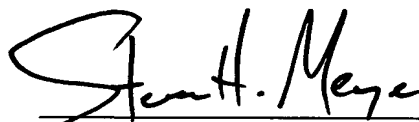
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respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection as it may be applied to claims 1-20.

In view of the foregoing amendment and discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application including claims 1-20 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven H. Meyer", is written over a horizontal line.

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